

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the following claims which are pending in the present application:

1. (Currently Amended) A computer-implemented method, comprising:

receiving a plurality of primary bids from a plurality of primary bidders respectively allowing primary bidders to each place a primary bid for displaying an associated advertisement within a results page of a search based on a search string;  
receiving a selectively placed secondary bid from a secondary bidder allowing a secondary bidder to selectively place a secondary bid to increase one of augment the primary bids of a one of the primary bidders by a monetary amount; and  
storing the secondary bid.
2. (Currently Amended) The computer-implemented method of claim 1, wherein the primary bid is expressed as a price-per-action that the primary bidder is willing to pay for a particular action, and wherein each of the primary bidders is a retailer of one or more products or services and the secondary bidder is a manufacturer of at least one of those products or services.
3. (Currently Amended) The computer-implemented method of claim + 2, wherein the particular action is selected from the group consisting of a cost-per-acquisition, a cost-per-lead, and a cost-per-click.

4. (Currently Amended) The computer-implemented method of claim 1, further comprising allowing more than one secondary bidder to selectively place a secondary bid to augment the primary bid of the primary bidder.
5. (Currently Amended) The computer-implemented method of claim 4, further comprising determining an order in which the associated advertisement of each primary bidder is to be displayed on the results page is based on a combination of the primary bidder and each secondary bid associated therewith.
6. (Currently amended) The computer-implemented method of claim 1, wherein each secondary bid augments the primary bid only for a defined time period.
7. (Currently Amended) A computer-implemented method, comprising:
  - receiving a plurality of primary bids, each from a primary bidder, for displaying an associated advertisement within a results page of a search based on a search string;
  - receiving at least one secondary bid, each from a secondary bidder, to augment increase a primary bid of a selected primary bidder by a monetary amount;
  - determining the total bid for each primary bidder by combining the primary bid of the primary bidder and each associated secondary bid; and
  - determining an order in which to include the associated advertisements of the primary bidders within the results page based at least in part on the total bid for the primary bidder; and
  - displaying the results page.

8. (Currently Amended) The computer-implemented method of claim 7, wherein the primary bids are expressed as a price-per-action that each primary bidder is willing to pay for a particular action, and wherein at least some of the primary bidders are retailers of one or more products or services and at least one secondary bidder is a manufacturer of at least one of those products or services.

9. (Currently Amended) The computer-implemented method of claim 8, wherein the particular action is selected from the group consisting of a cost-per-acquisition, a cost-per-lead, and a cost-per-click.

10. (Currently Amended) The computer-implemented method of claim 7, wherein determining the order is also based on an indication of how frequently the associated advertisement is viewed by a person performing the search.

11. (Currently Amended) The computer-implemented method of claim 7, further comprising receiving more than one secondary bid.

12. (Currently Amended) The computer-implemented method of claim 7, wherein each secondary bid comprises a temporal component that specifies a time period for which the selected primary bid is to be augmented.

13. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable storage medium, having stored thereon a sequence of instructions which when executed by a computer, cause the computer to perform a method, comprising:

receiving a plurality of primary bids from a plurality of primary bidders  
respectively allowing primary bidders to each place a primary bid for displaying an  
associated advertisement within a results page of a search based on a search string;

receiving a selectively placed secondary bid from a secondary bidder allowing a  
secondary bidder to selectively place a secondary bid to increase one of augment the  
primary bids of a one of the primary bidders by a monetary amount; and

storing the secondary bid.

14. (Currently Amended) The computer-readable storage medium of claim 13, wherein the primary bid is expressed as a price-per-action that the primary bidder is willing to pay for a particular action, and wherein each of the primary bidders is a retailer of one or more products or services and the secondary bidder is a manufacturer of at least one of those products or services.

15. (Currently Amended) The computer-readable storage medium method of claim 14, wherein the particular action is selected from the group consisting of a cost-per-acquisition, a cost-per-lead, and a cost-per-click.

16. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable storage medium having stored there on a sequence of instructions which when executed by a computer, cause the computer to perform a method, comprising:

receiving a plurality of primary bids, each from a primary bidder, for displaying an associated advertisement within a results page of a search based on a search string;

receiving at least one secondary bid, each from a secondary bidder, to increase augment a primary bid of a selected primary bidder by a monetary amount;

determining the total bid for each primary bidder by combining the primary bid of the primary bidder and each associated secondary bid; and

determining an order in which to include the associated advertisements of the primary bidders within the results page based at least in part on the total bid for the primary bidder; and

displaying the results page.

17. (Currently Amended) The computer-readable storage medium of claim 16, wherein the primary bids are expressed as a price-per-action that each primary bidder is willing to pay a particular action, and wherein at least some of the primary bidders are retailers of one or more products or services and at least one secondary bidder is a manufacturer of at least one of those products or services.

18. (Currently Amended) The computer-readable storage medium method of claim 17, wherein the particular action is selected from the group consisting of a cost-per-acquisition, a cost-per-lead, and a cost-per-click.

19. (Currently Amended) A computer system, comprising:

a processor; and

a memory coupled to the processor, the memory storing instructions which when executed by the processor cause the processor to perform a method, comprising:

receiving a plurality of primary bids from a plurality of primary bidders respectively allowing primary bidders to each place a primary bid for displaying an associated advertisement within a results page of a search based on a search string;

receiving a selectively placed secondary bid from a secondary bidder allowing a secondary bidder to selectively place a secondary bid to increase one of augment the primary bids of a one of the primary bidders by a monetary amount; and

storing the secondary bid.

20. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 19, wherein the primary bid is expressed as a price-per-action that the primary bidder is willing to pay for a particular action, and wherein each of the primary bidders is a retailer of one or more products or services and the secondary bidder is a manufacturer of at least one of those products or services.

21. (Currently Amended) The system method of claim 20, wherein the particular action is selected from the group consisting of a cost-per-acquisition, a cost-per-lead, and a cost-per-click.

22. (Currently Amended) A system, comprising:

a processor; and

a memory coupled to the processor, the memory storing instructions which when executed by the processor cause the processor to perform a method, comprising:

receiving a plurality of primary bids, each from a primary bidder, for displaying an associated advertisement within a results page of a search based on a search string;

receiving at least one secondary bid, each from a secondary bidder, to ~~augment~~ increase a primary bid of a selected primary bidder by a monetary amount;

determining the total bid for each primary bidder by combining the primary bid of the primary bidder and each associated secondary bid;

determining an order in which to include the associated advertisements of the primary bidders within the results page based at least in part on the total bid for the primary bidder; and

displaying the results page.

23. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 22, wherein the primary bids are expressed as a price-per-action that each primary bidder is willing to pay for a particular action, and wherein each of the primary bidders is a retailer of one or more products or services and the secondary bidder is a manufacturer of at least one of those products or services.

24. (Currently Amended) The ~~method~~ system of claim 23, wherein the particular action is selected from the group consisting of a cost-per-acquisition, a cost-per-lead, and a cost-per-click.

25. (Original) The system of claim 22, wherein determining the order is also based on an indication of how frequently the associated advertisement is viewed by a person performing the search.

26. (Original) The system of claim 22, further comprising receiving more than one secondary bid.